
REPORT OF AGENT IN UTAH.

REPORT OF UINTAH AGENCY.

UINTAH AGENCY, *August 16, 1892.*

SIR: As directed by you in office circular of June 23 last, I have the honor to submit this my third annual report of affairs at this agency.

UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCIES, CONSOLIDATED.

Condition.—The year has been one of unusual activity in all departments of agency work, including schools, and I am gratified to be able to note a marked advancement in the condition and disposition of the entire tribes under my charge. I mean they are surely if slowly getting into closer touch with the customs, laws, and methods of civilization. Especially are they beginning to realize that civilization or eventual annihilation is the question that confronts them. To this end I have steadily instructed them, and many of the more intelligent seem able to grasp the subject and to urge it upon their fellows. But the longer I am with them the more thoroughly am I convinced that sudden strides over the deep chasm that separates them from the higher nineteenth century civilization is not to be expected. "Here a little and there a little" will well apply to the Indian for some time to come.

I entirely agree with Dr. Dorchester that the universal "reservation school" is the true and economical method of elevating the masses of the Indians. In their superstitious minds the returned and educated Indian of an Eastern school is a "prodigy" not to be emulated but rather feared and put through the gauntlet of ostracism and ridicule. I have found these Indians bitterly opposed to sending their children off the reservation to any school. To any and all appeals

of that kind they have the ready answer, "We don't want to send our children to some distant school to die."

Many superstitions still cling to these Indians, but they are slowly overcoming them. No house-burning has occurred during the year, and few, if any, ponies have been killed at the graves of friends.

Uintah Agency is beautifully located on the table-land slope of Uintah Mountains, about 10 miles from the base, and is surrounded by tillable lands, abundantly watered by the "ever-rushing" mountain streams.

This reservation contains about 2,000,000 acres and comprises the entire watershed of the Uintah and Duchesne rivers. It was set apart for the perpetual use of the Utes by President Lincoln in an executive order October 3, 1861, and subsequently by four several acts of Congress, the latest of which dates May 24, 1888, and is occupied by two tribes, the Uintah and the White River Utes.

Population by tribes:

	Uintahs.	White Rivers.
Total population	452	384
Males	245	206
Females	207	178
Males, 18 years and over	125	110
Females, 14 years and over	140	107
Males, 6 to 16 years	74	58
Females, 6 to 16 years	64	57

The Uintahs have been on this reserve much longer than the White Rivers, and are as a tribe further on in industry and civilization, better patrons of schools, etc., though a very perceptible improvement in the White Rivers is noticeable in the last year. Sow-a-wick, their chief, and a man of excellent parts, good friend of schools, and loyal to the Government, for some reason did not please them: he was considered an usurper. They said that one Saws-no-cut was their rightful chief, and that if he were made chief they would bring their children to school. I reported to the Commissioner, and by his consent Saws-no-cut was recognized chief, and, true to their promise, they brought in some twenty new scholars the following Monday.

Schools.—Two fine and commodious schoolhouses were erected at this agency last summer, by contract, which at last furnishes a comfortable home for this school, although many improvements must yet be added. The location is superb. A fine lawn stretches for 60 rods in front, in which I have set an orchard of choicest fruit of great variety, now two years old; also the school garden of 5 acres is cultivated among the trees, and abundance of water flows in ditches close to the houses.

School opened October 5, but the houses not being completed until December 1, the attendance for the first quarter was small, but during the entire nine months reached an average of 41. Very satisfactory progress was made by all the pupils. I have erected two fine flag poles, one at school buildings and one at agency plaza, though as yet we have but one flag, made by the agency ladies two years ago.

I will say that the extra work incident to the fitting up in detail of an entire new school premises, which included the clearing of a dense growth of young bushes and trees from 15 acres of ground, building of vegetable cellar, henhouse, cow barn, and other necessary outbuildings, ditches, etc., taxed the time and energies of superintendent and industrial teacher to their utmost.

Farming.—I note a decided advance in farming on the entire reserve; more farms are opened and closer attention is paid to details on the part of older farmers. The subjoined statistics will show a gratifying increase in all kinds of produce, as well as in the building of houses. The harvesting is now being done with a prospect of a good yield. It would be nearly impossible to make actual measurements of grain and vegetables, as consumption is going on all the time, many crops being partly and some largely consumed before thrashing time.

Issues and annuities.—Regular weekly issues, consisting of flour and net beef, are made to these Indians, and irregular issues of sugar, salt, baking powder, soap, coffee, and bacon, amounting to nearly half their subsistence, as also clothing, blankets, gingham, flannels, shawls, shoes, boots, hose, pants, vests, coats, overcoats, and duck suits; full supplies of all these for every school child.

An annual cash per capita payment is made to these tribes from the interest of funds held in trust by the Government. This amounted this year to \$13.93 for Uintahs and \$8.62 for White Rivers, \$3,500 being deducted from the White River annuity to pay what is known as the Meeker pension.

Agency dwellings.—The agency dwellings are a rather rude type of lumber house, weather-boarded perpendicularly, with rough lumber, no battens, and only whitewashed; the plaster, also, being of the rudest sort. I have in the past year repaired the plastering on all, and added new dressed siding to the physician's dwelling and squared up, lathed, and plastered the two rooms, making it fairly presentable and quite comfortable. The agent's house should be sided up with lapsiding, and painted. I have also made additions to the dwellings of the farmer, engineer, and issue clerk, making them very good and neat. Since the finishing of the new school buildings, the old one (made habitable by considerable work) has been occupied partly as a dwelling by the blacksmith and carpenter, and partly as a storage-room for goods and supplies.

Improvements.—During the last fiscal year I have added to the great improvements noted in the last year's report, a fine gristmill, 30 by 40 feet, and 20 feet eaves; all the lumber, flooring, and shingles being dressed by our agency machinery. This adds greatly to the appearance of the agency, and will be of untold benefit to the Indians.

The two handsome schoolhouses, with outbuildings, so finely situated 60 rods north of the agency dwellings, also mainly completed within the last year, and inclosed by a five-wire fence, add much to the general appearance. One new bridge, 30 feet span, and two others completely overhauled, also belong to the year's work.

The greatest step in advance in agriculture was the purchase and distribution of some 1,200 fruit trees, and as much small fruit, which were carefully set out on both reservations by the farmers, who report all of 90 per cent living and doing well. As a civilizing agent no one thing can excel tree culture.

Several Indian dwellings have been built. My plan is to require the Indian to build and chink a log house, then my carpenter adds floor, roof, windows, and doors. The roof of dirt, being at once cheaper and more comfortable in this dry climate, both winter and summer, is the one in general use.

Irrigation.—Situated as is this reserve in the very heart of the great intermountain plateau of this continent, its future in an agricultural sense, in common with this entire area, depends entirely on the treatment and development of irrigation. Happily the water for that purpose is in such great abundance and the descent of same so great that irrigation is comparatively simple; yet some ditching too costly for Indians to undertake ought to be done, because the best lands of the reserve would thus become available for farming, and the important matter of allotments be furthered by the ambition of the Indian to secure the most eligible locations. As remarked in my last year's report, it was the almost universal opinion that the law of March 3, 1891, concerning ditches on Government reservations applied to Indian reservations, and one company was formed in Uintah County to take out a ditch from White Rock Creek across some 12 miles of Indian lands on to public lands beyond, which would have been of great benefit to the Indian lands as well as a profit to the county. A decision by the honorable Commissioner that the said law did not apply in that manner put an end to the movement.

I would recommend that in cases like the above, where the water is shown to be abundant, that a special permit be granted by the honorable Secretary of the Interior, to the end that the Indians gain the benefit of these fine lands, and the example of progress be thus set them.

Grazing.—Next in importance to irrigation comes the matter of grazing. This reserve may be said to constitute one vast range, and these Indians have many cattle and horses, but not enough to consume the grasses. Hence these fine grazing districts become the coveted prizes of numerous sheep and cattle owners; and to prevent trespassing, and to collect proper fines from those who do, has been a matter of no small importance in the management of the reserve.

Within the last year I have been authorized to and have made definite arrangements to rent some 675,840 acres of surplus grazing lands on the western end of this reserve. Having been duly advertised, the bids were opened on June 22 last; but it was decided by the honorable Commissioner that the bids were all too low, whereupon I was directed to solicit informal bids by correspondence, which I proceeded to do. Although the bids have been materially raised, none has as yet been accepted, hence the renting is yet incomplete.

The liquor traffic still continues to baffle the best efforts of police, United States

marshals, and courts, alike. At my special request United States Marshal E. H. Parsons detailed two deputies, in addition to local deputy U. M. Curtis, to look after the whisky sellers on this reserve and vicinity, with the excellent help of my agency police. Many arrests were made, some for selling liquor to the Indians and others for having it on the reserve; but owing to the great cost and difficulty of getting Indians to court, distant 150 miles, and the indifference of courts in the matter and the disposition to discredit Indian testimony, it has to be said that the penalties, when conviction was obtained, were shamefully inadequate. Yet the liquor-selling community are convinced that they can not carry on their nefarious traffic with impunity. For definite figures see statistics.

Crimes among the Indians have been almost unknown during the past year. Some quarrels and difficulties, usually the result of liquor, have been uniformly settled by three arbitrators appointed by the agent; their decision is usually so fair and just as to need no alteration. This is the course I am taking to teach them some of the principles of self-government and to prepare them for the higher step of "courts of Indian offenses."

Police.—My police have done their duty faithfully during the past year.

Allotments.—No allotments of lands in severalty have yet been made on this reservation, although much talked of by the more progressive. I am of the opinion that this important matter deserves close attention by the Department, and should be made the subject of careful inquiry by all inspectors. My own view is that the matter of making more extensive ditches will have much to do in inducing Indians to seek allotments. The rearing of fruit trees and small fruits is also a good incentive to seeking a permanent home. At no distant future these Indians will remember with gratitude the day when they were induced to cultivate orchards.

Industries.—I note a decided improvement in all industrial lines. There are fewer positively idle Indians. No sooner do they hear of any authorized work than more Indians offer their services than can be hired. Indians haul all agency freight (with slight exceptions in very bad weather), accompanied by a white person to transact the business. For this service they receive \$2 per hundred weight.

Missions.—As a missionary field these agencies still remain unoccupied. I had a letter of inquiry from the Rev. Theo. Hartwig, of the missionary board of the Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, proposing to make a tour of inspection, preliminary to establishing a mission here, to which I replied favorably. I received a card stating that my letter would be laid before their board at its next meeting. I am hopeful that some favorable action will come of it, and that this long-neglected field will be supplied. The want is seriously felt by the fifteen or more employes and their families, who are members of orthodox churches, and who have faithfully maintained a Sabbath school under the careful leadership of Superintendent Binford.